



Virginia Green Lodging

Pollution Prevention Strategies
for the Hospitality Industry

www.deq.virginia.gov/p2/lodging

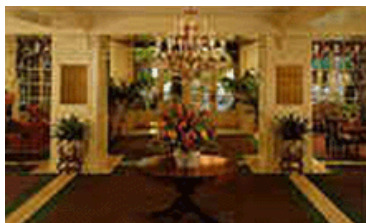
The Virginia Green Lodging program is the Virginia Department of Environmental Quality's (DEQ) initiative to promote pollution prevention (P2) practices in the tourism and hospitality industry. **Green Lodging** encourages hotels, resorts, and other hospitality operations to be aware of their impact on the environment and to take steps to reduce these impacts. **Green Lodging** is a **non-regulatory** program, and participation is completely **voluntary** and **free of charge**.



In Support of "Nature-Based" Tourism. Not everyone spends vacation in search of rare and endangered species. However, increasingly, tourists who come to Virginia, as well as Virginians themselves, are spending their vacations enjoying nature. These nature enthusiasts want to protect the natural resources that they enjoy. These people are environmentally-aware consumers that recycle and make purchase decisions with concern for the environment. Naturally, while they are vacationing in Virginia, they want to stay at facilities that share this ethic.

Green Lodging facilities provide that resource for the environmentally-aware consumer. When someone visits a hospitality facility that is in the **Green Lodging** program they can expect to find a facility that is doing what it can to protect the environment. There are literally dozens of things that a hotel or hospitality facility can do to help protect the environment. At a bare minimum, **Green Lodging** facilities are required to provide:

- **Optional Linen Service.** Sheets and towels are not automatically changed every day during your stay, thus decreasing usage of water, energy, and harmful detergents.
- **Recycling.** ...or at least provide the opportunity for guests to recycle. In certain areas of the state, a comprehensive recycling



Williamsburg Hospitality
House



program is simply not feasible. However, facilities should have a written explanation available of the recycling opportunities that they provide.

- **Water Conservation.** The facility must have a plan for conserving water that should consider water-saving faucets, showerheads, and toilets, leak detection, and an effective landscape watering plan.
- **Energy Conservation.** The facility must have a plan in place that encourages the replacement of lighting and equipment to energy-efficient alternatives such as compact-fluorescent lighting, LED Exit signs, lighting sensors, efficient heating and cooling, and EnergyStar/energy-efficient computers and other equipment.
- **Green Events Package.** The facility must offer a “green” or “environmentally-friendly” package for conferences, meetings, and other events; ie, you must have be able to offer recycling and other waste minimizing elements to your “environmentally-aware” customers.

Why Practice *Green Lodging*?

- **Conserving Natural Resources.** Hospitality facilities use a significant amount of materials and produce a great deal of wastes. Simple measures can be implemented that will greatly reduce this impact.
- **Preventing Pollution & Saving Money.** P2 is the way to get there, because it focuses on *source reduction* – “why do we produce the waste in the first place?” P2 solutions usually result in reduced material usage and cost savings.
- **Gaining a Competitive Edge in Marketing.** Participants in *Green Lodging* can use the program logo in marketing materials and can promote the ability to provide “environmentally-friendly” conferences and events.
- **Catering to Environmentally-Aware Customers.** Not everyone will appreciate it, but a significant percentage of your guests will appreciate your commitment to the environment; and they will come back. Many guests will actually be willing to pay a bit more to feel good about supporting an environmentally-responsible business.
- **Increased Conference Business.** Conference planners for **environmental organizations** must portray a message that is consistent with their organization’s goals. Increasingly, **major corporations** are also requiring that their employees support corporate environmental initiatives.
- **Free Assistance.** DEQ’s Office of Pollution Prevention has trained staff that are available to provide on-site assistance and guidance in solving waste management problems.
- **Public Recognition.** *Green Lodging* provides certificates and room placards listing the P2 practices of the facility. This information and more details are included on the **Green Lodging** website (www.deq.virginia.gov/p2/lodging) that can be linked to through the facility’s site.



Examples of P2 practices in hotels and resorts:

- Optional Linen Service - can reduce water usage by up to 30% and reduces linen wear and detergent use.
- Recycling - bottles, cans, plastics, and paper can significantly reduce solid waste generation.
- Water Conservation - the use of low-flow fixtures can reduce water usage up to 40% (plus reduces water & sewer bill\$!)
- Energy Efficiency - conversion to compact fluorescent bulbs can save up to 75% on energy usage, while reducing labor; purchase of efficient HVAC systems and EnergyStar computers and equipment can save up to 50% in energy costs.
- Dispensers – reduces the waste of soap and other toiletries and saves time and money.
- Landscaping – native vegetation and low-impact landscaping reduces water usage, fertilizer and pesticide use, and can reduce heating and cooling bills.
- Bulk purchase of environmentally-friendly cleaners can save money and reduce toxic exposures to staff and guests.



How Can Your Facility Join?

All you have to do to join is to make a voluntary commitment to reduce your facility's environmental impact. The easiest way to join is to fill out the *Green Lodging checklist* of good ideas, ***Pollution Prevention Practices for Hotels & Resorts***. FAX the completed list to 804-698-4533 or send to: VA DEQ Office of Pollution Prevention; 629 East Main Street; Richmond, VA 23219; Attention: Tom Griffin. DEQ will prepare a framed certificate, summarizing your activities.

For the checklist or additional information, go to www.deq.virginia.gov/p2/lodging

OR

contact DEQ's Tom Griffin at 804-698-4545 or rtgriffin@deq.virginia.gov

